

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES

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Bishop, Schumer, Clinton Urge Restoration of Important Science Funding Affecting BNL

New Study Cites Dire Consequences if Funds are Not Restored

Washington, DC—Citing a new study from the Department of Energy (DOE), Congressman Tim Bishop and Senators Charles Schumer and Hillary Rodham Clinton warned today of dire consequences if funding is not restored to the DOE's Office of Science. Among a number of impacts nationwide, the study warned that if funding is not increased, the Relativistic Heavy Ion Collider (RHIC) at Brookhaven National Laboratory (BNL) will be shuttered for Fiscal Year 2007 and progress will stall on development of the National Synchrotron Light Source II (NSLS II).

The funds are in peril because a FY 2007 budget has not been passed for the DOE, as a result it is currently funded by a Continuing Resolution which funds the agency at the prior year's levels. The proposed FY 2007 budgets that passed the House of Representatives and the Senate Appropriations Committee requested \$4.1 billion for the Office of Science, a \$505-million increase over FY 2006 funding. However, because the DOE's funding for this year was going to remain flat, with the increase shifting to the Office of Science; Bishop, Schumer and Clinton are separately urging the DOE and House and Senate appropriators to allow the agency flexibility to fund important research.

"This unpredictable funding environment is devastating to our nation's scientific competitiveness," Bishop said. "Instead of being a world leader in scientific research, we are telling young scientists that if you want to do world-class research in a stable environment, don't do it here. We need to fix this situation and be able to assure the dedicated researchers at Brookhaven National Lab and other labs, that we will not have a repeat."

"Unless we stop starving Brookhaven of the funding it needs, we jeopardize ongoing scientific research that is vital to all Americans while risking the loss of high-tech jobs that are essential to Long Island," said Senator Schumer said. "To ensure that Brookhaven remains a regional powerhouse and that its research goes uninterrupted, we must restore this funding immediately."

"We successfully worked to secure Brookhaven from the President's budget cuts last year and now we are fighting again because the leadership of last Congress abdicated their responsibility to complete these appropriations bills. We must have sufficient funding for what can only be described as a world-premiere research facility," Senator Clinton said. "We simply cannot continue to undermine our research facilities and our reputation in this way. We will do everything we can to get Brookhaven the funding it needs for the RHIC and NSLS-II."

The RHIC is a world-renowned 2.4-mile superconductor that accelerates gold ions to nearly the speed of light and causes collisions that recreate the 'Big Bang', offering a glimpse into the birth of the universe during its first few microseconds. For the upcoming fiscal year, its budget was scheduled to be increased by \$40.8 million to \$143.4 million, enabling full use of the billion dollar project.

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The NSLS II, an advanced scientific initiative, was scheduled to receive \$45 million in new funding to begin design and development of a state-of-the-art facility. The physical site of the NSLS II system has not been selected, however, the New York Congressional delegation has been working hard to site the facility at BNL. The funds for design and development for NSLS II would be administered by BNL.

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